

A User's Guide to the Minimum Housing Code - 2003

This is a guide to the performance standards of the Minimum Housing Code. **All dwellings** in the City of Asheville must be maintained to these minimum standards. The booklet is available at the Housing Office of the Building Safety Department at 161 South Charlotte Street, Asheville, NC 28803 (828-259-5764)

LANDLORDS – All rental property must have a Housing Certificate or a Certificate of Occupancy issued after July 1, 1994. All property must be maintained so that it is compliant with the Minimum Standards of the Housing Code. The City of Asheville encourages landlords and tenants to use a written report when dwelling units are rented, so that both parties are aware of the condition of the dwelling unit. Forms are available from the Housing Office or from www.ashevillenc.gov. The City also encourages landlords to respond promptly to tenant notification of repairs needed, particularly when the issue pertains to the Housing Code.

TENANTS – Your dwelling unit must meet the Minimum Standards of the Housing Code, this is the responsibility of the landlord. You are responsible for maintaining the cleanliness of the unit and to report problems to the landlord. The Housing Code standards may be obtained from the Housing Office at 161 South Charlotte Street or from the City website at www.ashevillenc.gov. Tenants may call the Housing Office at 828-259-5764 with specific questions. The City recommends that tenants notify the landlord in writing of problems with the dwelling. Forms are available from the Housing Office or from www.ashevillenc.gov. The landlord needs to have a reasonable amount of time to make the repairs. If the landlord fails to make repairs, the tenant may lodge a complaint with the Housing Office against the landlord. The Housing Office will require compliance with the Housing Code.

PRIMARY RESIDENCE – At the change of occupancy, Owners are required to have a Housing Certificate, a Certificate of Occupancy or a Life Safety Letter of Compliance issued after July 1, 1994. A Life Safety Review means that the house appears safe for habitation. The standards for the review are found on page 2 (Section 4-209) and more information about what the review involves may be found on the back cover of this booklet. All properties within the City must be maintained to the standards of the Minimum Housing Code (4-210). If any owner wishes to use the dwelling as a rental they must be sure that they have the required Housing Certificate.

Deteriorated and Dilapidated Properties: The Housing office should be notified of any property that is substandard. Additionally, any group of 5 or more citizens may petition the Housing Office to investigate a property that does not meet the standards of the Housing Code.

Inspections: Initial Housing Inspections and Life Safety Inspections can be performed by licensed North Carolina Home Inspectors who are registered with the Housing Office. Follow up inspections, permit inspections and complaint inspections may only be performed by Housing Code Enforcement Officers. Please contact the Housing Division at (828) 259-5764 or visit www.ashevillenc.gov for further information.

INDEX TO THE PERFORMANCE STANDARDS:

Pg 2	209 - Unsafe Conditions
Pg 3	210 – Performance Standards
Pg 3	210.A - Fire Safety Requirements
Pg 3	1) Address
Pg 3	2) Smoke Detectors
Pg 3	3) Storage of combustibles
Pg 3	4) Firestopping and Draftstopping
Pg 3	5) Means of Egress
Pg 4	6) Master Meters
Pg 4	210.B - Light and Ventilation Requirements
Pg 4	1) Light
Pg 4	2) Ventilation
Pg 5	3) Mechanical ventilation
Pg 5	210.C - Space and Sanitation Requirements
Pg 5	1) Occupancy
Pg 5	2) Junk & Abandoned vehicles
Pg 5	3) Vegetation, Overgrowth
Pg 5	4) Rubbish and Garbage
Pg 5	5) Infestation
Pg 6	6) Sanitation
Pg 7	210.D – Building Requirements
Pg 7	1) Exterior (foundation, walls, protection, roof, attic, insulation, outbuildings)
Pg 10	2) Interior
Pg 10	3) Windows
Pg 11	4) Doors
Pg 12	5) Stairs, Landings and Porches
Pg 12	210.E - Electrical Requirements
Pg 14	210.F - Plumbing Requirements
Pg 16	210.G - Mechanical Requirements
Pg 18	210 H - State Code Violations

Sec. 4-209. Life Safety / Unsafe Conditions.

The Code Enforcement Officer shall determine that a dwelling is unfit for human occupancy, unsafe, and represents a threat to life or property, if any of the following conditions exist:

1	Lack of or Inadequate potable Water Service
2	Presence of raw sewage or open sewer, inside the dwelling, whether from broken, plugged or inoperative fixtures or pipes inside the dwelling or migrating into the dwelling from the outside.
3	Improperly Operating or no Sanitary Facilities (MSD hook up, Septic Tank)
4	Lack of or Inadequate Hot Water Supply
5	Lack of or Inadequate Heating Facilities (between November 1 and March 30 of any given year)
6	Chimney not safe for intended use.
7	Lack of or Unsafe Electrical System
8	Nonfunctioning or Missing Smoke Detectors
9	Address not visible from Public Street.
10	Failing or failed primary structural members that threaten the stability of the dwelling and/or visible structural defects that appear to render the structural members ineffective.
11	Dwelling is a physical threat due to immediate risk of collapse.
12	Missing roof, or part of roof missing.
13	The means of exit or escape in the event of fire or other emergency is blocked or structurally unsafe.
14	An excessive Internal accumulation of items or garbage that block exits, overloads the structural floor system or creates an unhealthy condition.
15	Interior wall sheathing or sheeting that is not present, or has been removed, to a point where little or no protection from spread of fire from story to story, or from other habitable spaces to bedrooms.
16	Occupancy of habitable space that does not meet below grade occupancy standards
16	Presence of uncontained flammable or combustible liquids or gases, poisonous solids, liquids or gases or life or health threatening depletion of oxygen.
17	Multiple Violations of the standards set forth in Section 4-210.

Sec. 4-210. Minimum Standards.

Without excluding other ways and means of determining that a dwelling is unfit for human habitation, the Code Enforcement Officer shall apply the minimum standards set forth in Section 4-210 of this Code in determining whether a dwelling is unfit.

Section 4-210.A - Fire Safety Requirements

210.A.1 - Street Address - Each dwelling shall bear a street address number of a color contrasting with the surface on which the number is mounted, such number to be of sufficient size to be visible from the nearest public street, but not less than two inches in height on one or two family residences and four inches in height on all other multi-family residences. Any new numbers to be installed shall be four inches in height. If the dwelling is not visible from the nearest public street, a sign or standard bearing the address number shall be placed on the principal public street access point to the dwelling, such number to meet the standards set forth herein.

210.A.2 - Smoke Detectors - . Every dwelling shall be provided with a smoke detector listed by Underwriters' Laboratories, Inc. or other equivalent national testing laboratory on each level of the dwelling and in stairwells, hallways and other common areas of multiple-unit dwellings. Such detectors shall be installed in accordance with either the National Fire Protection Association Standard 72, National Fire Alarm Code, Chapter 8, or the minimum protection designated in the manufacturer's instructions.

210.A.3 - Storage of combustibles –

210.A.4 - Fire-stopping and draft-stopping - Fire-stopping shall be maintained to cut off all concealed draft openings both horizontal and vertical and to form a fire barrier between floors and between the upper floor and the roof space.

Draft-stopping shall be maintained to cut off all concealed draft openings in floor/ceiling assemblies and in attics.

210.A.5 - Means of egress - Means of egress. In multi-family houses having two or more dwelling units above the first story, every dwelling unit above the first story shall have access to at least two exit ways. One common exit is permitted provided that all of the following conditions are met:

1. Maximum distance of travel to reach the exit or stairs from the entrance door to any dwelling unit shall not exceed 30 feet.
2. Maximum number of dwelling units served by the exit shall not exceed four per floor.
3. Maximum gross area of the dwelling units shall not exceed 3,500 square feet per floor.
4. Maximum building height shall be one story above the level of exit discharge.

210.A.6 – Master Meters. All duplex and multi-family dwellings must conform to the City's Unified Development Ordinance. If permitted in 1977 or later, as required by N.C. Gen. Stat. sec. 143-151.42, each individual dwelling unit must have separate electric and gas utility meter services.

Section 4-210.B - Light and Ventilation Requirements

210.B.1 – Light Requirements - Every habitable room shall have at least one window or skylight facing directly to the outdoors. The minimum total window area, measured between stops, for every habitable room shall be eight percent of the floor area of such room. Whenever walls or other portions of structures face a window of any such room and such light-obstruction structures are located less than three feet from the window and extend to a level above that of the ceiling of the room, such a window shall not be deemed to face directly to the outdoors and shall not be included as contributing to the required minimum total window area. Whenever the only window in a room is a skylight-type window in the top of such room, the total window area of such skylight shall equal at least 15 percent of the total floor area of such room.

210.B.2 – Ventilation Requirements - Every habitable room (except kitchens with exhaust fans in good working order) shall have at least one window or skylight, which can be easily opened. The total of openable window area in every habitable room shall be equal to at least 45 percent of the minimum window area size or minimum skylight-type window size, as required, or shall have other approved, equivalent ventilation.

210.B.3 - Mechanical Ventilation. Year-round mechanically ventilating conditioned air systems may be substituted for windows, as required herein, in rooms other than rooms used for sleeping purposes. Window type air conditioning units are not included in this exception.

- 3.a – Bathrooms. Every bathroom with tub and/or shower shall comply with the light and ventilation requirements of this Code for habitable rooms in accordance with the requirements of the North Carolina Building Code when the structure was built. Electrical exhaust fans used for mechanical ventilation must be vented directly to the outside.
- 3.b – Range hoods, if installed shall be vented to the outdoors pursuant to the North Carolina State Building Code. Vents serving range hoods shall not terminate in an attic or crawl space or other areas inside the building. Unvented range hoods must be installed per manufacturer's recommendations.
- 3.c - **Clothes Dryer Exhaust.** Dryer vents shall be installed pursuant to the North Carolina State Building Code.

Section 4-210.C - Space and Sanitation Requirements

210.C.1 – Occupancy.

- 1.a. Required space. Every dwelling shall contain at least 150 square feet of floor space for the first occupant thereof and at least 100 additional square feet of floor area per additional occupant. The floor area shall be calculated on the basis of the total area of all habitable rooms. Provided, however, the requirement of this section shall not be applicable to hotels, motels and other transient dwellings.
- 1.b. Required space in sleeping rooms. In every dwelling, every room occupied for sleeping purposes by one occupant shall contain at least 70 square feet of floor space, and every room occupied for sleeping purposes by more than one occupant shall contain at least 50 square feet of floor space for each occupant thereof.
- 1.c. Ceiling height. Habitable rooms shall have a ceiling height of not less than seven feet. Hallways, corridors, bathrooms, and water closet rooms shall have a ceiling height of not less than six feet-six inches measured to the lowest projection from the ceiling. If any room in a dwelling has a sloping ceiling, the prescribed ceiling height of the room is required in only one-half the room area. No portion of the room measuring less than five feet from the finished floor to the finished ceiling shall be included in any computation of the minimum room area.

Exception: Before the North Carolina Building Code adoption of the August 1936 edition, there was not a written Code. The ceiling heights on structures built before that time are considered acceptable, provided that the ceiling height is reasonable. Reasonable being at least six feet five inches in 50 percent of the total area. Provided no alterations have been made to the structure after the August 1936 date.

- 1.d. Occupancy below grade. No basement or cellar space shall be used as a habitable room or dwelling unless:
 - 1. The floor and walls are resistant to leakage of underground and surface runoff water, and show no evidence of recent water leakage or accumulation; and
 - 2. The total window area (or window well area) is equal to at least 22 inches in height, 20 inches in width and a window sill of not more than 44 inches in height. The window area shall not be less than eight percent of the floor space, except that in non-sleeping rooms, mechanical ventilation and electrical light may be used in place of window ventilation and light; and
 - 3. An easily accessible means of fire escape in addition to the basement or cellar stair is provided. Windows which are easily accessible and of sufficient size to accommodate occupants escaping a fire are acceptable

210.C.2 - Junk & Abandoned vehicles. Refer to Zoning Ordinance

210.C.3 - Vegetation, Overgrowth. Refer to Sanitation Ordinance

210.C.4 - Rubbish and Garbage. Refer to Sanitation Ordinance

210.C.5 - Sanitation requirements. Every owner of a dwelling shall provide a clean, safe and sanitary dwelling and shall be responsible for maintaining in a clean, safe and sanitary condition outbuildings and appurtenances to the extent that such outbuildings and appurtenances are regulated by this Code.

210.C.6 – Hazardous Materials. Presence of uncontained flammable or combustible liquids or gases, poisonous solids, liquids, gases, life or health threatening depletion of oxygen not in compliance with the State Building Code, or manufacturer's product installation instructions.

210.C.7 - Extermination. Every owner of a dwelling or a boarding house shall be responsible for the extermination of any insects, rodents, or other pests within the dwelling or premises. If the owner fails to provide such extermination services and evidence of insect, rodent or other pest infestation is present, extermination shall be ordered by the Code Enforcement Officer; such extermination shall be conducted by a licensed exterminator; the owner shall then provide the Code Enforcement Officer with a statement of action from the licensed exterminator. Monthly extermination treatment is the maximum that an owner shall be required to provide.

Section 4-210.D – Building Requirements

210.D.1 – Structural and Exterior Surfaces

D.1.a. Foundation. The building foundation system shall be maintained in a safe manner and capable of supporting the load which normal use may cause to be placed thereon. Beneath the dwelling, there must be firm, reasonably dry ground ("reasonably dry" means no mud, standing water, running water or evidence of same). Mobile homes shall be set up and secured as required by the regulations of the State Building Code for Manufactured/Mobile Homes.

D.1.b. Structural supports. Structural supports. Every structural element of the dwelling shall be maintained in a structurally sound condition and show no evidence of deterioration which would render it incapable of carrying normal loads. Termites, termite damage, fire damage, absence of footings or cracked or split wood structural supports are examples of evidence of deterioration.

When additional direct support is required, piers shall be used under girders, at walls or other primary support points.

D.1.c Exterior walls.

1. Every exterior wall shall be reasonably weathertight (free of holes, breaks, loose or rotting boards or timbers, and any other conditions which might admit rain, dampness, vermin or air to the wall cavity or to the occupied spaces of the building). All siding material shall be kept in repair. "Kept in repair" includes maintenance of painted surface areas where the protective paint surface no longer protects the wood or other organic building materials from weather damage, repair of cracks or holes exceeding one-quarter inch (1/4) in width and replacement of wood or other organic components that show visual signs of rot, or are soft to the touch or otherwise show evidence of rotting.
2. Existing skirting shall be maintained free from broken or missing sections, pieces or cross members which compromise the insulation characteristics of the skirting. Skirting shall be securely attached and sized from the ground to the lower outside perimeter of the structure. If skirting is not provided, or if existing skirting is removed, water lines and drain lines shall be insulated to prevent freezing.
3. Replacement or new skirting shall be constructed of materials intended for exterior use and properly sized and mounted to prevent free access to the crawl space of the dwelling. Adequate means to gain access to the dwelling crawl space, via inside or outside, shall be furnished. Adequate means to gain access to heating or other mechanical equipment, via inside or outside, shall be furnished.

D.1.d Protective treatment. All exterior wood surfaces (other than decay-resistant woods, such as cedar, redwood, cypress or pressure-treated lumber) shall be protected from the elements and decay by painting or other protective covering or treatment. Minimal chipping or peeling of surfaces not directly exposed to the elements and not reasonably expected to contribute to decay of wood surfaces is not required to be treated. All siding shall be weather-resistant and watertight. All masonry joints shall be sufficiently tuckpointed to insure water and air tightness. "Sufficiently tuckpointed" means that mortar shall not be removable by finger pressure.

D.1.e. Roof. Roofs shall be structurally sound, and maintained in a safe manner and have no defects which might admit rain or cause dampness in the walls or interior portion of the dwelling. The following may constitute evidence of defects: missing shingles; flashing(s) missing; roof deflection deeper than 1/6 of the depth of the rafter and/or rafters cracked; damage to ceilings (ceiling plaster loose or falling, brown spots, etc.), sheet rock hanging, etc. in rooms below roof or fire damage.

- No more than two layers of roofing materials (shingles, shakes, roofing) shall be permitted without certification by an architect or engineer registered in North Carolina that the roof will safely support all required live and dead loads pursuant to requirements of the North Carolina State Building Code.

D.1.f. Attics / Insulation. All attics shall be **accessible and** adequately ventilated. Insulation rated at least R-19 (or minimum thickness of six inches) and consisting of rock wool (glass), fiberglass or other material exhibiting fire-resistance and insulation

capacities equal to (or greater than) rock wool or fiberglass shall be required in the accessible ceiling or attic of the highest story containing habitable rooms in all dwellings. The owner of any dwelling must produce an insulation certification card or other identifying marks as described in the North Carolina State Building Code before that owner can obtain a housing certificate.

Exception: Knob & tube wiring shall not be covered with insulation.

D.1.g Outbuildings. Garages, storage buildings and all other accessory structures shall be structurally sound. When the condition of plumbing, heating, structural or electrical facilities present an imminent danger to occupants, or to the public, if such outbuilding is accessible to the public, those facilities shall be made safe in a manner consistent with this Code

210.D.2 Interior Surfaces. Every floor, interior wall and ceiling shall be substantially vermin-proof, shall be kept in sound condition and good repair and shall be safe to use and capable of supporting the load which normal use may cause to be placed thereon. Interior finish shall be free of excessive holes and cracks. No cardboard or other highly combustible or improper wall finish or ceiling finish shall be allowed. No rotted, fire-damaged, or loose flooring shall be allowed. All floors shall be level enough so as not to present a tripping hazard. Every bathroom floor surface and kitchen floor surface shall be constructed and maintained so as to be reasonably impervious to water and so as to permit such floor to be readily kept in clean and sanitary condition.

210.D.3 Windows and window assemblies.

- D.3.a. Each window shall be weathertight, watertight and rodent proof, and shall be kept in sound working condition and good repair. If daylight can be seen around the inside or outside perimeter of the window casing, that window does not meet this standard. Every openable window shall be equipped with an effective locking mechanism or other mechanism that functions as a lock.
- D.3.b. Each window sash shall be fully supplied with glass window panes or an approved substitute which are without open cracks or holes. Wood, cardboard or polyethylene or other plastic film are not approved substitutes. A window pane with a crack or hole must be replaced or the crack or hole sealed with clear silicone seal. A broken window (pieces missing or exposed glass edge) must be replaced.
- D.3.c. Each window sash shall be properly fitted and weathertight within the window frame. If daylight can be seen from around the inside or outside perimeter of the window sash, that window does not meet this standard.
- D.3.d. Each window required for ventilation for habitable rooms shall be capable of being easily opened or closed and secured in position by window hardware.
- D.3.e. Security bars. When security bars exist, one grill in each room used for sleeping should be equipped with a release device designed for emergency escape. Occupancies below grade, windows fitted with security grills intended for emergency escape should have a vertical measurement of no more than 44 inches from the sill or fixed portion of the grill to the finished floor. Exception: If a room used for sleeping has a door leading directly to the outside of the building at or to grade level.
- D.3.f. In order to provide for required ventilation, dwelling units which do not have central air conditioning systems shall have fitted screens in good repair on all operable windows. One window or skylight facing directly outdoors must be provided in all habitable rooms and must have a screen. Screens shall provide a continuous barrier to insects. Warning: Screens will not stop a child from falling out a window; a child shall be kept away from an open window.

210.D.4 Doors

- D.4.a. Every exterior door, basement or cellar door and hatchway shall be substantially weathertight, watertight, and rodent proof, and shall be kept in sound working condition and good repair. "Good repair" includes no delamination or splitting of wood doors.
- D.4.b. Every exterior door to a dwelling shall be provided with properly-installed hardware that is maintained to insure reasonable ease of operation to open, close or secure in an open or closed position, as intended by the manufacturer of the door and the attached hardware. Properly-installed hardware shall consist of knob, bib and operating lock with sufficient strength to prevent unauthorized entry in all situations short of disassembly, force or use of a key or pick. All exterior doors shall be capable of being locked from the inside and outside in a manner that will provide for the safety and security of the occupant(s).
- D.4.c. Exterior door frames shall be properly maintained and shall be equipped with weather-stripping and thresholds as required to be substantially weathertight, watertight, and rodent and insect restrictive when the door is in a closed position. If daylight can be seen from inside around the inner perimeter of an exterior door frame, that door frame does not meet this standard.

- D.4.d. Exterior door jambs, stops, headers and moldings shall be securely attached to the dwelling, maintained in good condition without splitting or deterioration that would minimize the strength and security of the door in a closed position. If daylight can be seen from inside around the outer perimeter of an exterior door frame, that door frame does not meet this standard.
- D.4.e. Interior door hardware. Every interior door shall be provided with proper hardware, securely attached and maintained in good condition. Hasp lock assemblies are not permitted on any side of the door of habitable rooms.
- D.4.f. The use of double cylinder locks on common area egress doors for multi-family rental units is prohibited.

210.D.5 Stairs, Porches and Appurtenances

- D.5.a. Every inside and outside stair, porch and any appurtenance thereto shall be safe to use and capable of supporting the load that normal use may cause to be placed thereon and shall be kept in sound condition and good repair. Stairs and steps shall be free of holes, grooves and/or cracks large enough to constitute accident hazards. Risers shall be reasonably uniform in height. Stair coverings shall be securely mounted and shall not interfere with safe use of the stairs.
- D.5.b. Protective Railings. Every handrail and guard shall be firmly fastened and capable of supporting normally imposed loads and shall be maintained in good condition. Protective railings and guards are required for stairs and stairwells exceeding 4 risers high and shall be required for every porch, terrace or entrance platform located at least thirty (30) inches above the adjacent finished grade or floor. Railings and guards shall be in accordance with the requirements of the North Carolina State Building Code when the structure was built. New railings and guards shall comply with the current North Carolina State Building Code. Stairs located in or leading to an unheated and uninhabitable attic or basement must be sturdy and have at least one handrail.

Section 4-210.E - Electrical Requirements

210.e.1 Electric service. Adequate electric service must be provided to the dwelling. "Adequate" means a minimum of 60 ampere service with no more than five two-wire branch circuits connected and a total connected load of less than ten kilowatts. If a service has six or more two-wire branch circuits, 100 ampere service at a minimum must be provided. If the connected electrical load exceeds the capacity of a 100 ampere service, a service of sufficient ampere capacity to safely bear the connected electrical load shall be furnished. "Edison base" fuses shall not be permitted as components of any electrical service, and no more than one two-wire branch circuit shall be connected to any fuse, circuit breaker or other approved over-current protection device. Drop cords from a neighboring source, generator or similar source are not "adequate" for purposes of this Code.

Every new or additional electrical outlet and fixture required by the Code shall be installed, maintained and connected to a source of electric power in accordance with the provisions of the North Carolina Building Code

210.E.2 All outlets, switches, wiring and light fixtures shall be safe and operable. Any new outlets shall be installed to the standards of the North Carolina State Building Code. Appliances such as refrigerators, washing machines, dishwashers, microwaves and air conditioners shall be protected by a grounded receptacle. An ungrounded ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) may be installed pursuant to the National Electrical Code (NEC), however, these are not recommended for refrigerators. Outlets within 6 feet of a source of water shall be protected by a grounded outlet or GFCI. An arc-fault interrupter is recommended, but not required, for extensions of bedroom circuits. No extension cords shall be spliced or used as fixed wiring or permanently installed to service appliances or fixtures. Extension cords shall be used only as temporary extensions for portable equipment not routinely used in an area where permanently wired receptacles are not available or installed. Cords shall not be run through openings in walls, ceilings, or doorways; attached or fixed permanently to any surface; run under carpets or floorings; or plugged into a power strip. Multi-outlet assemblies (power strips) shall be equipped with fuse or circuit breaker and used in accordance with the limitation of the product label of the testing agency. Electrical odor, flickering lights, visibly frayed wiring, broken switch plates or outlet plates or failure of circuit-tester check shall be evidence of an unsafe electrical system.

210.E.3 Light Fixtures and Outlets

- E.3.a Halls and stairways. Every hall and stairway of every dwelling, shall be lighted, including exterior stairways and stairways in halls and public space.
- E.3.b Every hall, water closet compartment, bathroom, laundry room or furnace room shall contain at least one ceiling-mounted or wall-mounted fixture outlet. For purposes of this section a laundry closet shall not be considered a laundry room.
- E.3.c Bedrooms shall have, in addition, at least one wall switch controlled lighting outlet or ceiling light fixture or permanent fixture controlled by a pull chain.
- E.3.d In bathrooms, the lighting outlet shall be controlled by a wall switch or fixture pull-chain. In addition to the lighting outlet in every bathroom and laundry room, there shall be provided at least one receptacle outlet. Any new or replacement bathroom receptacle outlet shall have ground fault circuit interrupter protection.

- E.3.e Every habitable room or space shall contain at least two separate and remote duplex receptacle outlets.
- E.3.f In kitchens, three separate, remote and accessible receptacle outlets shall be provided, and a wall or ceiling light outlet controlled by a wall switch or fixture pull-chain shall be provided. An outlet dedicated to powering an appliance and/or not easily accessible because it is blocked by an appliance shall not be counted as a separate outlet. In kitchens with less than six linear feet of counter top, two of the three required outlets may be within the counter top space.

Exception: When an existing kitchen area is less than 70 square feet of floor area, two separate, remote and accessible receptacle outlets shall be provided, and a wall or ceiling lighting outlet controlled by a wall switch or fixture pull-chain shall be provided.

Section 4-210.F - Plumbing Requirements

210.F.1 System. Every dwelling shall be furnished with a potable water supply system. "Potable water supply" means direct connection to a well, to a public water utility or equivalent water service delivery system, and does not include water delivered through a hose or via containers. Every dwelling shall contain not less than a kitchen sink, lavatory, tub or shower, and a water closet all in good working condition and properly connected to a functioning water and sewer system. Every plumbing fixture and water and waste pipe shall be maintained in good sanitary working condition. "Properly connected" means connected with approved plumbing materials (no radiator hose, duct tape, etc.). Any new, additional or repair plumbing must meet the current requirements of the North Carolina Building Code. Provided, however, that the kitchen sink standards enumerated herein shall not apply to hotels, motels and other transient places unless kitchen sinks are otherwise required.

210.F.2 Location of sanitary facilities. All required plumbing fixtures shall be located within the dwelling and be accessible to the occupants of the same. The water closet, tub or shower and lavatory shall be located in a room or adjoining rooms affording privacy to the user. Required bathrooms shall be accessible from habitable rooms, hallways, corridors or other protected or enclosed areas.

210.F.3 Hot and cold water supply. Every dwelling shall have connected to the kitchen sink, lavatory, and tub or shower an adequate supply of both cold and hot water. All water shall be supplied through a functioning distribution system connected to a potable water supply.

210.F.4 Water heating. Every dwelling shall have water heating facilities which appear to be properly installed, appear to be in safe and good working condition, respond to normal operating controls, and capable of heating water to such a temperature so as to permit hot water to be drawn consecutively (that is, at one tap after the other, and not simultaneously) at every required kitchen sink, lavatory basin, bathtub or shower at a temperature of not less than 116 degrees F. Such water heating facilities shall be capable of meeting the requirements of this subsection when the dwelling's heating facilities required under the provisions of the Code are not in operation. Apartment houses may use a centralized water heating facility capable of delivering an amount of hot water in the quantity and at the temperature described above.

F.4.a Water heaters shall be equipped with approved relief valves, which are piped to a point not more than six inches above the floor. The pipe material for the relief valve shall be properly connected and rated for interior water service lines. The discharge end of the extension tube may not be threaded.

210.F.5 Bathroom access. Bathroom access shall be provided in a manner that does not require an occupant to leave the dwelling to gain access. Privacy of bathrooms shall be afforded by doors complete with privacy hardware intended by the manufacturer for that purpose.

210.F.6 Water closet, lavatory and bath facilities for boarding houses. At least one flush water closet, lavatory basin, and bathtub or shower, properly connected to a water and sewer system and in good working condition, shall be supplied for each four rooms within a rooming house wherever such facilities are shared. All such facilities shall be located on the floor they serve within the dwelling so as to be private and reasonably accessible from a common hall or passageway to all persons sharing such facilities.

Section 4-210.G - Mechanical Requirements

210.G.1 Heat requirements. Every dwelling shall have heating facilities which appear to be properly installed, appear to be in safe and good working condition, respond to normal operating controls, and capable of maintaining a room temperature of 65 degrees in all habitable rooms. Each heating system shall have at least one readily-adjustable control for regulation of living space temperature in each dwelling unit. Radiator control knobs in good working order shall be regarded as a readily-adjustable control.

G.1.a Where a central heating system is not provided for a dwelling, the dwelling shall be provided with properly installed baseboard electric heat, properly installed and properly vented wood or fossil fuel heater(s), or unvented natural gas heaters

having oxygen depletion sensors listed for residential use by UL, ETL, or other North Carolina recognized testing laboratory and installed in strict accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.

- G.1.b The following heating devices do not meet the requirements of subsection G.1.a. of this section: Portable electric heating units and unvented fuel-burning heaters.
- G.1.c. The use of unvented fuel-burning heaters is prohibited in any bedroom.
- G.1.d. Heating appliance clearances maintained at 36 inches from combustible materials and/or surfaces, except that clearances may be reduced as provided in National Fire Protection Association's Standard 211, "Chimneys, Fireplaces, Vents and Solid Fuel-Burning Appliances," 1992 edition.
- G.1.e. Central warm air heating systems for multi-family units have not been allowed since 1991. The furnaces for shared systems may be repaired or cleaned, however, may not be reconfigured or replaced unless the entire system is made to comply with the present North Carolina State Building Code. This means that ventilation air may not be recirculated from one dwelling unit to another. The owner and heating contractor will need to address the entire scope of work in the permitted work including but not limited to fire stopping, damper systems when necessary; fire-rating mechanical rooms if necessary and allowing proper access to mechanical areas.

210.G.2. Chimneys must appear to be safe for use as specified and intended. "Specified" means use in connection with specific heating appliances or systems, or limitations of such use. "Intended" means use in connection with combustion of fuel, for which the following

- G.2.a Minimum chimney standards apply: Flue liner intact; Chimney mortar and bricks secure; Flue unobstructed; Fireplace firebricks intact.
- G.2.b Chimneys that do not meet these standards shall be either repaired or sealed.
- G.2.c Stove piping placed and secured with clearances as follows:
 - Minimum 12-inch brick clearance separation from combustibles; or
 - Minimum nine-inch air separation for insulated listed stove-piping; or
 - Minimum one-inch air clearance surrounded by six-inch glass fiber insulation and ventilated thimble assembly; or
 - Minimum two-inch air separation for insulated listed stove-piping with one-inch air space between inner and outer chimney components; and

as otherwise described in National Fire Protection Association's Standard 211, "Chimneys, Fireplaces, Vents and Solid Fuel-Burning Appliances," 1992 edition.

210.G.3. Fireplaces (gas logs)

210.G.4. Cooking equipment. All cooking equipment and facilities shall be installed in an approved manner and shall be maintained in safe working condition. Portable cooking equipment employing flame is prohibited as a substitute for approved cooking equipment. Portable cooking equipment is prohibited outside the kitchen area of a boarding or rooming house.

210.H Violation(s) of State Building Code Regulations for Existing Multi-Family Dwellings. A dwelling that is not in compliance with the State Building Code shall be considered unfit and ineligible for a Housing Certificate under this Code unless the owner has been granted a building permit for work that would bring the structure into compliance with the State Building Code. Expiration of the permit without completion of such work shall result in revocation of the Housing Certificate issued for such dwelling.

LIFE SAFETY REVIEW FOR OWNER OCCUPIED DWELLINGS

All non-owner occupied dwellings must have had a Housing Certificate dated after July 1, 1994. An owner's primary residence must meet the Minimum Standards of the Housing Code. However, owners may occupy the dwelling as long as it has been inspected for Life Safety violations and those have been corrected and checked by a Housing Code Enforcement Officer. The Safety Review may be performed by a Home Inspector who is registered with the Housing Office. It may be performed at the same time as the home inspection.

In general, the inspector will look at structural components including such items as foundation, floors, walls, columns or piers, ceilings, and roofs. The inspector will probe structural components where deterioration is suspected and they will go under floor crawl spaces, basements, and attic spaces except when access is obstructed, when entry could damage the property, or when dangerous or adverse situations are suspected.

BUILDING

The inspector will observe the roof and chimney(s), siding and trim on the exterior walls, decks, balconies and railings. They will operate all the exterior doors and probe exterior or structural building components where deterioration is suspected. They will check the interior for missing windows and unsafe conditions in floors, walls & ceilings. They will also check to make sure the address is affixed to the dwelling and is visible from the public way.

PLUMBING

The inspector will observe interior water supply and distribution systems and the interior drain and waste systems for functionality. The inspector will check hot water systems and will operate all kitchen and bathroom plumbing fixtures, except where the flow end of the fixture is connected to an appliance.

ELECTRICAL

The inspector shall observe the service entrance conductors; service equipment, grounding equipment and overcurrent devices. They will check the inside of the electrical panels and the circuit wiring. As the inspector moves through the dwelling he/she will test all receptacles for polarity and grounding and verify that each habitable room, kitchen and each bathroom has the required number of outlets. Hazardous and faulty wiring are considered Life Safety issues. The inspector will check response and location of the smoke detectors and shall note installed or dangerous extension cords.

HEATING

The inspector will visually inspect permanently installed heating systems and check their operation by using normal operating controls. The inspector will note improper use of portable or un-vented heating equipment. The inspector will observe the exterior of the chimneys but is not required to ascertain the internal condition of the flue lining.

A more complete inspection of any building component may be desirable for a potential buyer when purchasing a property or may be required by the inspector if the component does not appear to be safe.



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